

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
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P 020825Z MAR 78
FM USLO PEKING
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0009
INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY TAIPEI
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 PEKING 0550

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT CH
SUBJ: 5TH NATIONAL PEOPLE'S CONGRESS: REPORT ON REVISED CONSTITUTION

1. SUMMARY. PARTY VICE CHAIRMAN YEH CHIEN-YING DELIVERED HIS REPORT ON REVISION OF THE PRC STATE CONSTITUTION AT A MARCH 1 SESSION OF THE 5TH NATIONAL PEOPLE'S CONGRESS (NPC) PRESIDED OVER BY PARTY CHAIRMAN HUA KUO-FENG. FROM SKIMPY EXCERPTS BROADCAST AND PUBLISHED ON MARCH 2, THE NEW CONSTITUTION WOULD SEEM RELATIVELY UNCHANGED FROM THE 1975 VERSION. PREDICTABLY, IT DEVOTES GREATER ATTENTION TO NATIONAL MINNORITIES, OT GUARANTEES OF DEMOCRATIC PRACTICES AND RIGHTS, TO NEED FOR MORE RAPID DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATIONAL ECONOMY, AND TO THE IMPORTANCE OF SCIENCE, EDUCATION AND CULTURE. ONE PASSAGE ON "DEMOCRATIC MANAGEMENT WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF THE BROAD MASSES" MAY IMPLY EXPERIMENTATION WITH THE YUGOSLAV MODEL
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OF ENTERPRISE MANAGEMENT. THE REPORT -- AND PRESUMABLY THE NEW CONSTITUTION ITSELF -- BEAR THE STRONG IMPRINT OF YEH CHIEN-YING IN THE REPEATED AND UNCOMPROMISING INSISTENCE ON CONTINUING TO "HOLD HIGH THE GREAT BANNER OF CHAIRMAN MOA." THE NEW PREAMBLE WILL DECLARE THAT ADHERENCE TO MAO'S BANNER MEANS VICTORY, DEPARTURE FROM IT SETBACKS OR DEFEATS. END SUMMARY

2. PARTY VICE CHAIRMAN YEH CHIEN-YING DELIVERED HIS REPORT ON REVISION OF THE PRC STATE CONSTITUTION AT A MARCH 1 SESSION OF THE 5TH NATIONAL PEOPLE'S CONGRESS (NPC) PRESIDED OVER BY PARTY CHAIRMAN HUA KUO-FENG. EXCERPTS FROM YEH'S REPORT WERE BROADCAST AND PUBLISHED BY PRC MEDIA ON MARCH 2. WE PRESUME THAT THE ENTIRE REPORT, THE CONSTITUTION, AND OTHER NPC DOCUMENTS WILL BECOME AVAILABLE FOLLOWING ADJOURNMENT OF THE NPC. (COMMENT: IT SEEMS INCREASINGLY LIKELY THAT THE NPC WILL CLOSE ON EITHER MARCH 5 OR 6. NHK HAS LEARNED THAT THE CHINESE HAVE BOOKED SATELLITE TIME FOR THE EVENING OF MARCH 5, PRESUMABLY TO CARRY CLIPS OF THE CLOSING SESSION. THE PRC LEADERSHIP WOULD ALSO UNDOUBTEDLY WISH TO WRAP ITSELF IN PREMIER CHOU EN-LAI'S MANTLE BY ADJOURNING THE CONGRESS ON MARCH 5, THE 80TH ANNIVERSARY OF CHOU'S BIRTH.)

3. FROM SKIMPY EXCERPTS NOW AVAILABLE THE NEW CONSTITUTION WOULD SEEM RELATIVELY UNCHANGED FROM THE 1975 VERSION. PREDICTABLY, THE NEW CONSTITUTION WILL:
--DEVOTE GREATER ATTENTION TO NATIONAL MINORITIES AND TO THE CONCEPT OF THE "REVOLUTIONARY UNITED FRONT";
--INCLUDE NEW PASSAGES AIMED AT ASSURING OBSERVANCE "IN SPIRIT AND LETTER" OF DEMOCRATIC PRACTICES AND SOCIALIST NORMS. YEH STATED "WE MUST ENERGETICALLY...FIGHT AGAINST ANY VIOLATIONS OF THE PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC LIFE OR ENCROACHMENT ON THE RIGHTS OF CITIZENS" AND CALLED FOR A FULL GUARANTEE OF "THE PEOPLE'S RIGHT TO EXPOSE THE EVIL-DOERS AND EVIL DEEDS IN STATE ORGANS."
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HENCE THE CONSTITUTION, ACCORDING TO YEH, "MAKES FAIRLY BIG CHANGES IN THE ARTICLES CONCERNING ORGANS OF STATE AND STATE PERSONNEL AND SETS STRICT AND NECESSARY DEMANDS ON THEM."

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 PEKING 0550

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--STRESS THE NEED FOR MORE RAPID DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATIONAL ECONOMY THROUGH "CLEAR-CUT STIPULATIONS FOR CONSOLIDATING THE SOCIALIST ECONOMIC BASE AND DEVELOPING THE PRODUCTIVE FORCES AT HIGH SPEED"; AND
--HIGHLIGHT THE IMPORTANCE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, EDUCATION AND CULTURE.

4. ALL OF THESE PASSAGES REFLECT THE CHANGES -- BOTH IN PRACTICE AND STYLE -- IN CHINESE SOCIETY FOLLOWING THE PURGE OF THE GANG OF FOUR. TO A LARGE EXTENT THEY ARE ASSOCIATED WITH TENG HSIAO-PING AND HIS POLICIES. ONE CRYPTIC PASSAGE IN YEH'S REPORT ON "DEMOCRATIC MANAGEMENT WITH THE PARTICIPATION OF THE BROAD MASSES" MAY SIGNIFY SERIOUS EXPERIMENTATION WITH THE YUGOSLAV MODEL OF ENTERPRISE MANAGEMENT -- ANOTHER INNOVATION PRESUMABLY ASSOCIATED WITH TENG.

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5. BUT WHILE THE SUBSTANCE OF THE NEW CONSTITUTION SEEMS THE EMBODIMENT OF TENG'S POLICIES, THE TONE OF YEH CHIEN-YING'S REPORT IS QUITE DIFFERENT. REFLECTING THE "MODERATE" OR CONSENSUS POSITION ASSOCIATED WITH YEH SINCE AT LEAST MARCH 1977, THE REPORT AND THE CONSTITUTION ITSELF CONTAIN REPEATED AND UNCOMPROMISING DEMANDS THAT THE PARTY AND STATE CONTINUE TO "HOLD HIGH THE GREAT BANNER OF CHAIRMAN MAO." WRITTEN "PROMINENTLY" INTO THE PREAMBLE OF THE REVISED CONSTITUTION, ACCORDING TO YEH, IS THE AFFIRMATION THAT "THE BANNER OF CHAIRMAN MAO IS THE BANNER OF VICTORY. OUR REVOLUTION ADVANCES FROM VICTORY TO VICTORY WHENEVER IT ADHERES TO CHAIRMAN MAO'S THOUGHT AND LINE; IT SUFFERS SETBACKS OR EVEN DEFEATS WHENEVER IT DEPARTS FROM HIS THOUGHT AND LINE. THIS IS THE MOST ESSENTIAL LESSON IN THE HISTORICAL EXPERIENCE OF CHINA'S REVOLUTION."

6. COMMENT: IT IS STILL TOO EARLY TO ASSESS MEANINGFULLY ALTERATIONS IN THE LEADERSHIP EQUATION RESULTING FROM THE NPC. BUT THERE IS INCREASINGLY A SUSPICION THAT TENG HSIAO-PING

MAY NOT HAVE SIGNIFICANTLY BETTERED HIS POSITION. THE "PROMINENT" RETENTION OF MAO IN THE NEW CONSTITUTION, THE IMPRESSION THAT HUA WILL RETAIN THE PREMIERSHIP, THE EXTREMELY LOW PROFILE TAKEN AT THE NPC TO DATE BY TENG (HUA HAS NOW PRESIDED FOR THE SECOND TIME, TENG NOT AT ALL), TENG'S ABSENCE FROM GROUP DISCUSSIONS OF THE NPC AGENDA, AND THE APPARENT POLITICAL SURVIVAL OF ALL OF TENG'S ADVERSARIES ON THE POLITBURO STRONGLY SUGGEST A CHECKING OF TENG'S ASPIRATIONS AND A POLITICAL STALEMATE.

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